Preston Park u3a

Update November & December 2026

Welcome from your Committee

Preston Park u3a Open Day 26th September

We held another hugely successful and enjoyable Open Day in Knoyle Hall as part of national u3a week in September. Members found more activities to sign up for in our 60+ interest groups and we recruited 50 new Preston Park u3a members, ensuring we will continue to go from strength to strength. Many thanks to all Group Leaders and members who demonstrated the fun and learning they have in their groups and talked to those interested in joining them, and to all who helped on the day, particularly the kitchen team.

Nominations for next year's Committee

Three Committee members will not be standing for re-election at our Annual General Meeting on 3rd December and we are also seeking a new Secretary and one or two Deputy Chairs. The more Committee members we have, the better to share the workload! Please contact Chair Liz Rugg if interested or for more information.

Nominations for election, supported by a seconder, must be received by Carol Jenkins, our current Secretary, by **22nd November** at the latest. Details of how to nominate will also be in the AGM notice, which members will receive soon by email (or post for members without email), with arrangements for proxy voting.

Please renew your membership for 2027

Membership renewal notices will also be sent out in November. Please reduce our workload by responding promptly! We're happy to say we are able to keep our membership fee at £15 for 2027.

New members who joined our u3a at or after the Open Day have already paid for their 2027 subscription so do not need to renew.

Digital workshops

More than 70 of our members recently enjoyed two workshops led

by Ability Net, a national charity with a local branch that aims to help people become more comfortable with their digital devices. So much of the modern world relies on the use of smartphones, tablets or computers but many of us just don't feel confident in using our technology. Anna the trainer explained that AbilityNet can offer individual or small group support if you want to learn more or to practise and she gave the links and contact details below:

- My Computer My Way simple 'how to' guides to make your device easier to use: https://mcmw.abilitynet.org.uk/
- Digital Skills Training for older people and disabled adults: https://abilitynet.org.uk/free-tech-support-and-info/digital-skills-training-people-over-65-individual-application
- or call 0300 180 0028.

Updated Guidelines for Group Leaders

As part of our regular review of policies and guidance, we have updated the Guidelines for Group Leaders, with links to forms, policies and other documents. They are for reference to make life as easy as possible for our valued Group Leaders.

They include the important section on Membership Information and Security (Data Protection) in paragraphs 46 to 53.

ABC Fund

Anne Bickmore of the ABC Fund thanks members who donated a total of £257 after her talk at the September monthly meeting.

What's on in November

u3a Pub Quiz - Tuesday 3rd November at 2.30pm

All Preston Park u3a members are welcome at the Ladies Mile Pub Function Room, 2 Mackie Avenue, Patcham. Just turn up. It's £2 to join in, with tea or coffee available for £1, or drinks from the pub.

Monthly Meeting – Thursday 5th November at 2.15pm

Professor Tony Kushner will present a talk on '***Smuggling in Sussex***'. Tony's talk will concentrate on local smuggling history and the story of Jacob's Post in Ditchling (which some members of The Strollers may remember from a walk in 2025).

All Preston Park u3a members are welcome to our monthly general meetings at Knoyle Hall, Knoyle Road. Please let us know on arrival if you're a new member and you'll get a warm welcome.

Doors open at 1.45pm. Please bring £1.50 in cash to cover meeting and refreshment costs. And we always welcome volunteers to set up and put away chairs and tables or help in the kitchen.

Committee meeting – Friday 6th November at 10.15am

If you'd like to attend a monthly Committee meeting as an observer with a view to possibly joining the Committee please contact Chair Liz Rugg.

New Members' Tea – Wednesday 11th November at 3pm

Recently joined members who have not yet attended a New Members' Tea or Drink will be invited to this event to meet the New Members' Friend, Committee members and other new members. We'll answer all your questions to help you get the most out of your u3a membership. Bring a smartphone and we'll show you how to navigate our website and enquire about joining our groups.

Heritage Visit guided tour of the Royal Albert Hall - Friday 27th November

Fully booked for those lucky members who applied early!

What's on in December

u3a Pub Quiz - Tuesday 1st December at 2.30pm

Details as in November above.

Annual General Meeting – Thursday 3rd December at 2.15pm

All members are invited to our AGM at Knoyle Hall to receive the annual report and accounts for 2025/26 and elect the Committee for the following year. We'll then celebrate another successful year for Preston Park u3a with festive singing, cake and drinks.

Doors open 1.45pm. There's no charge for this meeting.

Committee meeting – Friday 4th December at 10am

The first monthly meeting of our newly elected Committee.

And to look forward to in January

u3a Pub Quiz - Tuesday 5th January 2.30pm

Details as in November above.

Monthly Meeting – Thursday 7th January at 2.15pm

Our talk will be on ***'Newhaven Fort - Then and Now'***. The manager of Newhaven Fort from 1987 until 2001, Ian Everest, will cover its military history and the trials and tribulations of converting this Ancient Monument into a popular visitor attraction. Other details as in November above.

News from our Groups

Heritage Visits Group

Group Leader John Colman is still awaiting a date yet to be announced in November for the Veolia Incinerator, Newhaven visit postponed from October. The Royal Albert Hall trip is sold out.

The 2027 visits programme will be available before the year end.

New Groups?

We have many members who would like to join a **Book Group**, but at present there are no places in our seven current groups, so would someone like to start a new Book Group?

Members have said they would be interested in a **Line Dancing Group**. Does anyone know of a suitable instructor or have experience of doing Line Dancing?

Our **Rummikub Group** is full, but there are members on the waiting list. Would you be interested in starting a second group?

Finally, another u3a have a **Bus Pass Group**. This could involve visiting a museum, having a meal or just going somewhere new. Would anyone be interested in starting one in Preston Park?

Please contact Sue Barlow or Julie Frayne – our Interest Groups Co-ordinators – or another Committee member if you are interested in starting any of these projects. We will give as much help and support as needed to get these ideas up and running.

New Spanish Conversation Group?

'Hola! I am exploring whether we can restart a Spanish Conversation Group. I haven't got as far as the details yet in terms of time or venue; at this stage it is just about whether there are enough interested people to make a viable group. The plan is to start a group for people who are confident Spanish speakers rather than beginners. If this is you and you'd like to join then please email me via this link: Liz Rugg.'

Poetry for Pleasure on Zoom Group

The new Poetry for Pleasure on Zoom Group is now up and running on the 2nd Friday of the month from 4 – 5.30pm. The next meeting is on 13th November. If you're stuck at home in wintry weather this could be just the thing to cheer you up! No expertise required and no limit on numbers. Contact Group Leader Heather Holford if you'd like to find out more.

Film Discussion Group

Group Leader Sandra Lipman writes: 'The Film Discussion Group has room for new members. We are a small friendly informal group who meet once a month and talk about all things film. Anybody interested should contact me for further details'. The group meets on the 3rd Thursday of the month at 2.30 pm at St Augustine's Café, Stanford Avenue. Email Sandra via this link.

Other ways to contact us

You can also contact our Interest Groups Co-ordinators, any Committee member and other key volunteers via the Contact page on our public website: https://prestonpark.u3asite.uk/contact/. Click on their name on that page and send them a message.

To contact a Group Leader about joining their group, go to the Groups page of our website https://prestonpark.u3asite.uk/groups/. Click on the name of the group, then on the Group Leader's name. A message box will appear that you can use to email them.

Or come and speak to us at a Monthly Meeting or other meeting.

Research opportunity

If you're 45 - 75 you might like to take part in PhD research at Sussex University exploring how blood pressure, lifestyle and mood relate to thinking, memory and physiological responses in middle- and late-aged adults.

You'd need to complete an online questionnaire on your own electronic device (~ 25 minutes) and then attend a laboratory session at the Brighton and Sussex Medical School, Trafford Centre, BN1 9RR (~ 150 minutes), including cognitive tasks and non-invasive physiological monitoring (e.g. heart rate and blood pressure). Participants will receive a £20 voucher for their time.

More information is available via this link.

National u3a news

u3a rewind

u3a rewind is a new project that will create a unique archive of the experiences and memories of u3a members for future generations. Members are invited to submit stories and photographs from the defining years of their youth - memories of the music, fashions and youth cultures that shaped your younger years.

Find out more and submit your stories by clicking here.

u3a getaways

With our own Preston Park u3a Holidays Group coming to an end next year, you could look at u3a getaways instead. Each getaway is an opportunity to explore somewhere new and meet u3a members from across the UK. In 2027 they include trips to see vintage aircraft at Shuttleworth and Duxford in March, wildlife conservation at Dartmoor Zoo in April and vineyard tours and expert-led wine tasting in Yorkshire in May.

Online talks and events

See u3a - Online learning events for the wide range of online talks and events on offer in November and December from the comfort of your own home. You can also sign up for a monthly events email.